



DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE

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IBERIAN CHURCHES HOLD MINISTRY SEMINAR

LISBON -- The second Anglican seminar for the clergy and lay people of the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church and the Lusitanian Church was held here Jan. 21-25 at Caso do Bom Pastor, a retreat center of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Lisbon.

The theme this year was the Christian ministry and its implications in sacramental theology and pastoral action, which was explored together with lectures on Anglican polity and organization.

The seminar was attended by 34 priests and lay people from Spain and Portugal. The teaching team included the Rt. Rev. Robert Witcher, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island; the Rev. Jaci Maraschin, professor of pastoral theology at the Anglican Seminary of Sao Paulo, Brazil; the Rev. Luis A. Quiroga, rector of Christ and Holy Family Church in Brooklyn, N. Y. and the Rev. Onell Soto, Mission Information Officer of the Episcopal Church Center in New York.

The Iberian Churches, which are celebrating the first century of their establishment this year, are now being fully integrated into the Anglican Communion.

The limited measure of religious freedom granted in Spain in 1868 enabled reform groups to spring up and the promulgation of the dogma of papal infallibility in 1870 prompted a movement for a return to a more primitive teaching in Portugal.

Both Churches do not regard themselves as new churches but as restoration of the ancient church of the land without later accretions in doctrine and worship.

The seminar afforded the opportunity for practical work in communication and preaching. Participants were asked to prepare news releases and sermon outlines that were later discussed and amended by the whole group.

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Every morning the Holy Eucharist was celebrated in the chapel, using the rites of the Portuguese, Spanish, Brazilian and American Churches.

During the days of the seminar, a group of participants were invited to attend Mass at a Roman Catholic Church in Carcavelos, near Lisbon, where a special prayer service was held in celebration of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The seminar was made possible through grants from the Diocese of Long Island (which maintains a Companion Diocese relationship with the Church in Portugal) and the World Mission in Church and Society division of the Episcopal Church Center.

The seminar also served to bring about a closer relationship between these two churches in the Iberian peninsula. Even though each country speaks a different language, communication was possible.

"We are no longer separated brethren," said the Rt. Rev. Luis Pereira, Bishop of the Lusitanian Church, who is visiting the Diocese of Long Island during the month of February.

At an evaluation session, the participants expressed their desire to have a similar activity next year in Seville, Spain. They also recommended that themes should be chosen in advance for proper preparation and that women should take an active part in the 1981 seminar.

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PICTURE CAPTION

80047 Three participants of the second Anglican seminar for clergy and laity of the Iberian Churches share a moment at a break in the proceedings in Lisbon, Portugal, last month. The three are, from left, the Rev. Arturo Sanchez, bishop elect in the Spanish Reform Church, Bishop Luis Periera of the Lusitanian Church and the Rev. Francisco Serrano of Seville.

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